

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for adding commercial value to a traffic control system, comprising:
a central processing unit;
communication means operably connected to the central processing unit permitting communication between the central processing unit and a computer network;
communication means operably connected to the central processing unit permitting communication between the central processing unit and at least one external sensor or external device that is used as part of a commercial application;
electronic connection means for connecting the apparatus to the traffic control system.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is at least partly remote-controlled via the computer network.
3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus provides at least one of the connected external sensors or external devices with access to the computer network.
4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus provides the traffic control system with access to the computer network.
5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus controls at least part of at least one of the connected external sensors or external devices.
6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is used to allow at least one of the connected external sensors or external devices to be at least partly remote-controlled via the computer network.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected external devices is an electronic display.
8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected external devices is at least a component of a wireless voice or data service system.
9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected external devices is a repeater for a wireless voice or data service system.
10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected devices is a digital camera.
11. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected devices is at least a component of an electronic toll collection system.
12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected devices is at least a component of a system for identifying specific vehicles.
13. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected devices is a short-range data transmitter or short-range data receiver.
14. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected devices is an emergency phone.
15. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein at least one of the connected external sensors or external devices provides traffic telemetry data.
16. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus uses at least part of the electrical power infrastructure of the traffic control system.
17. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus uses at least part of the data communication infrastructure of the traffic control system.

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18. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is able to run a digital image recognition software application.
19. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electronic connection means are operably connected to the central processing unit permitting communication between the central processing unit and the traffic control system.
20. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus controls at least part of the traffic control system.
21. A method of presenting a commercial to motorists, comprising the acts of:
 - providing an apparatus, comprising:
 - a central processing unit;
 - communication means operably connected to the central processing unit permitting communication between the central processing unit and a computer network;
 - communication means operably connected to the central processing unit permitting communication between the central processing unit and a traffic control system;
 - connecting the apparatus to a computer network;
 - providing at least one electronic display;
 - deploying at least one of the electronic displays so that motorists traveling along a route can see the deployed electronic displays;
 - providing the apparatus with traffic status data provided by a traffic control system deployed at least partly at the route;
 - providing a commercial in a digital format;
 - enabling the apparatus to decide when to display the commercial on the deployed electronic displays based on the traffic status data;

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enabling the apparatus to display the commercial on the deployed electronic displays to the motorists traveling along the route upon decision of the apparatus.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the method further comprises the acts of:

providing a plurality of the electronic displays;

deploying the plurality of the displays along the route;

providing at least two editions of a commercial in a digital format;

enabling the apparatus to display at least two of the editions of the commercial on the plurality of the deployed electronic displays in a sequence so that motorists traveling along the route potentially see at least a part of the sequence of the editions of the commercial.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the method further comprises the acts of:

providing a plurality of the apparatus;

deploying the plurality of the apparatus along the route;

providing at least two not identical editions of a commercial in a digital format;

enabling the deployed apparatus to display at least one of the editions of the commercial on at least one of their deployed electronic displays so that motorists traveling along the route potentially see at least a part of at least two not identical editions of the commercial;

24. A method of presenting a specific type of commercial to a specific type of motorist, comprising the acts of:

providing an apparatus, comprising:

a central processing unit;

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communication means operably connected to the central processing unit permitting communication between the central processing unit and a computer network;

communication means operably connected to the central processing unit permitting communication between the central processing unit and at least one electronic display;

communication means operably connected to the central processing unit permitting communication between the central processing unit and at least one sensor device;

connecting the apparatus to a computer network;

providing at least one electronic display;

deploying at least one of the electronic displays so that motorists traveling along a route can see the deployed electronic displays;

providing at least one sensor device that provides data suited to distinguish between different types of the motorists traveling along the route;

deploying at least one of the sensor devices so that the deployed sensor devices provide data suited to distinguish between different types of the motorists traveling along the route;

providing the data of the deployed sensor devices to the apparatus;

enabling the apparatus to distinguish between different types of the motorists traveling along the route based at least partly on the input of the deployed sensor devices;

providing at least two commercials in a digital format;

enabling the apparatus to decide which of the commercials to show to which type of the motorists;

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enabling the apparatus to selectively display the commercials on the deployed electronic displays to the types of motorists traveling along the route based on decision of the apparatus.

25. The method of claim 24, wherein the apparatus is attached to a component of a traffic control system.
26. The method of claim 24, wherein at least one of the deployed sensor devices is attached to a component of a traffic control system.
27. The method of claim 24, wherein at least one of the deployed electronic displays is attached to a component of a traffic control system.
28. The method of claim 24, wherein at least one of the connected devices is a digital camera.
29. The method of claim 24, wherein the apparatus is a component of the electronic display.
30. The method of claim 24, wherein the method further comprises the acts of:
 - deploying a plurality of the apparatus along the route;
 - providing at least two commercials in a digital format;
 - enabling the deployed apparatus to display at least one of the commercials on at least one of their deployed electronic displays so that motorists traveling along the route potentially see at least a part of the editions of the commercial.
31. The method of claim 24, wherein the method further comprises the acts of enabling the apparatus to provide data about how often a specific commercial has been displayed within a specific time range.

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